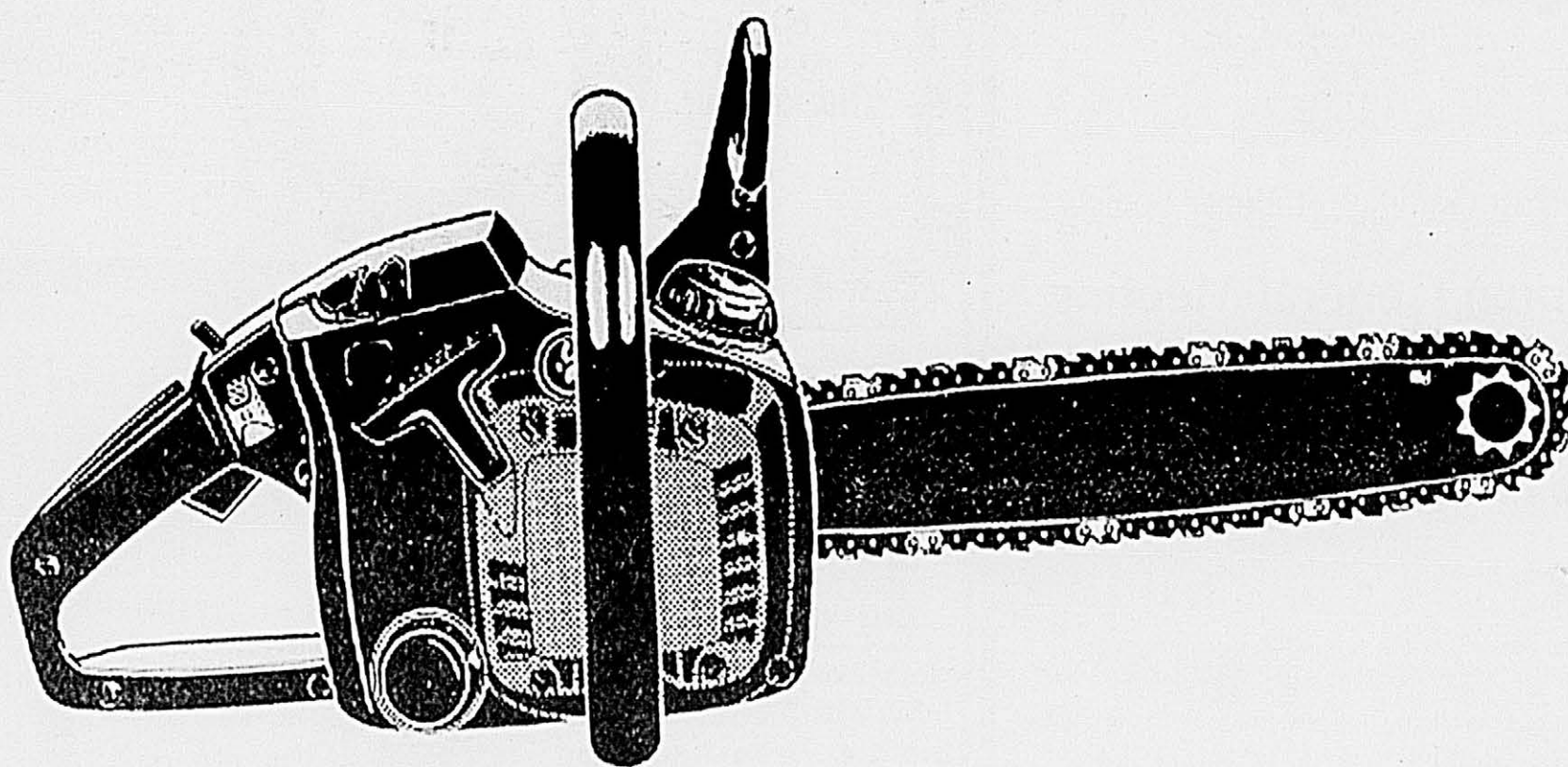
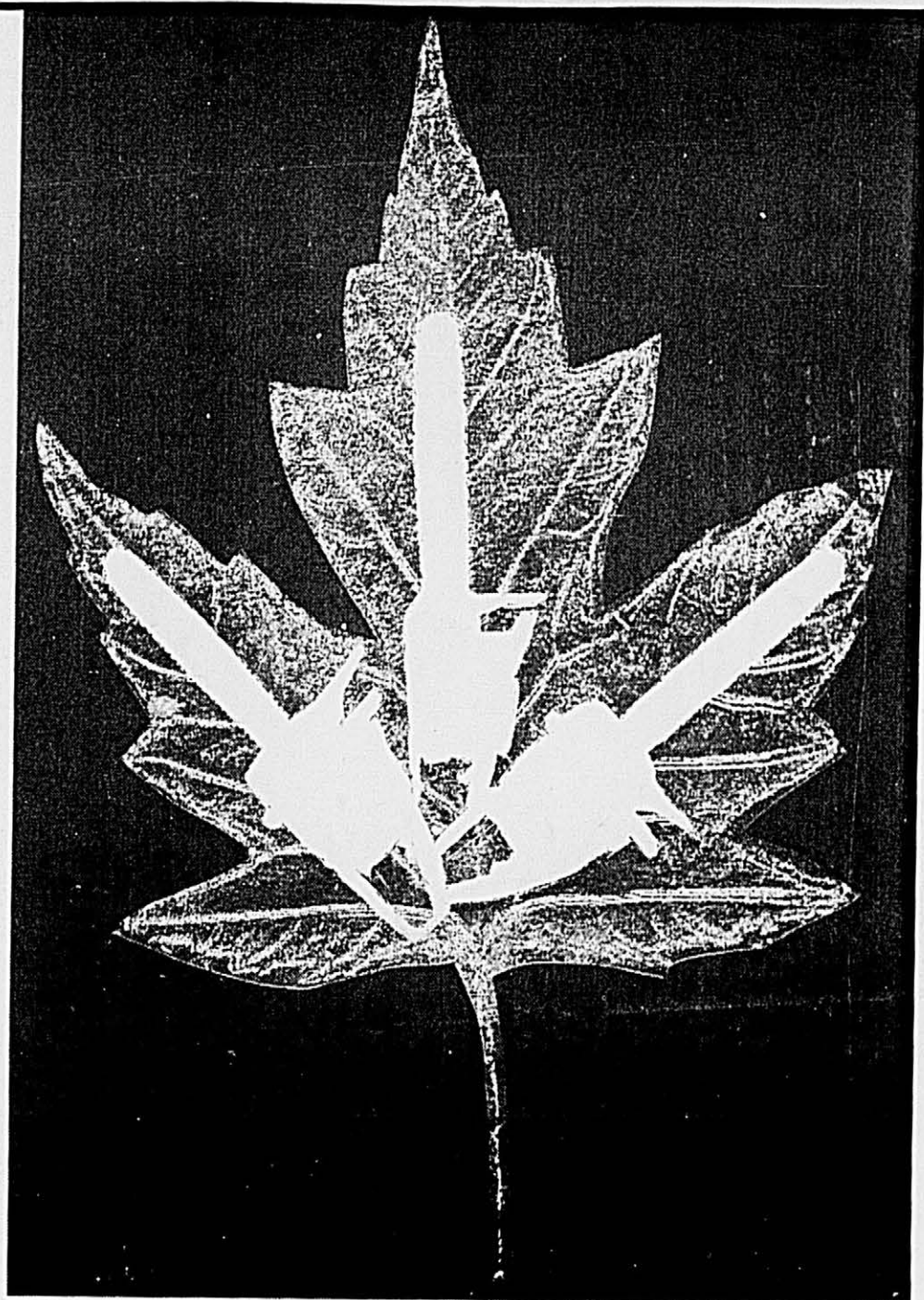


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Culture

The McGill Daily
volume 85 • number 57
February 29–March 6, 1996
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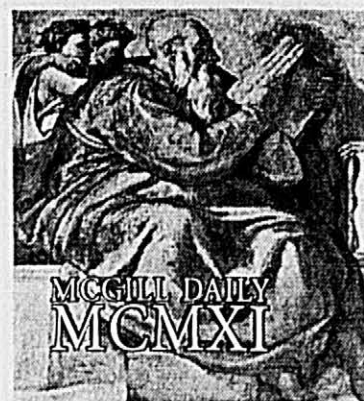
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Thomson House, 3650 McTavish Street

A light meal will be served

The Agenda of the Annual General Meeting
will include:

- *Resolutions pertaining to Constitutional Amendments
- End-of-year Reports of the PGSS Executive
- Question Period

Meet the Election Candidates
Discuss Referenda Questions

5:00 p.m.

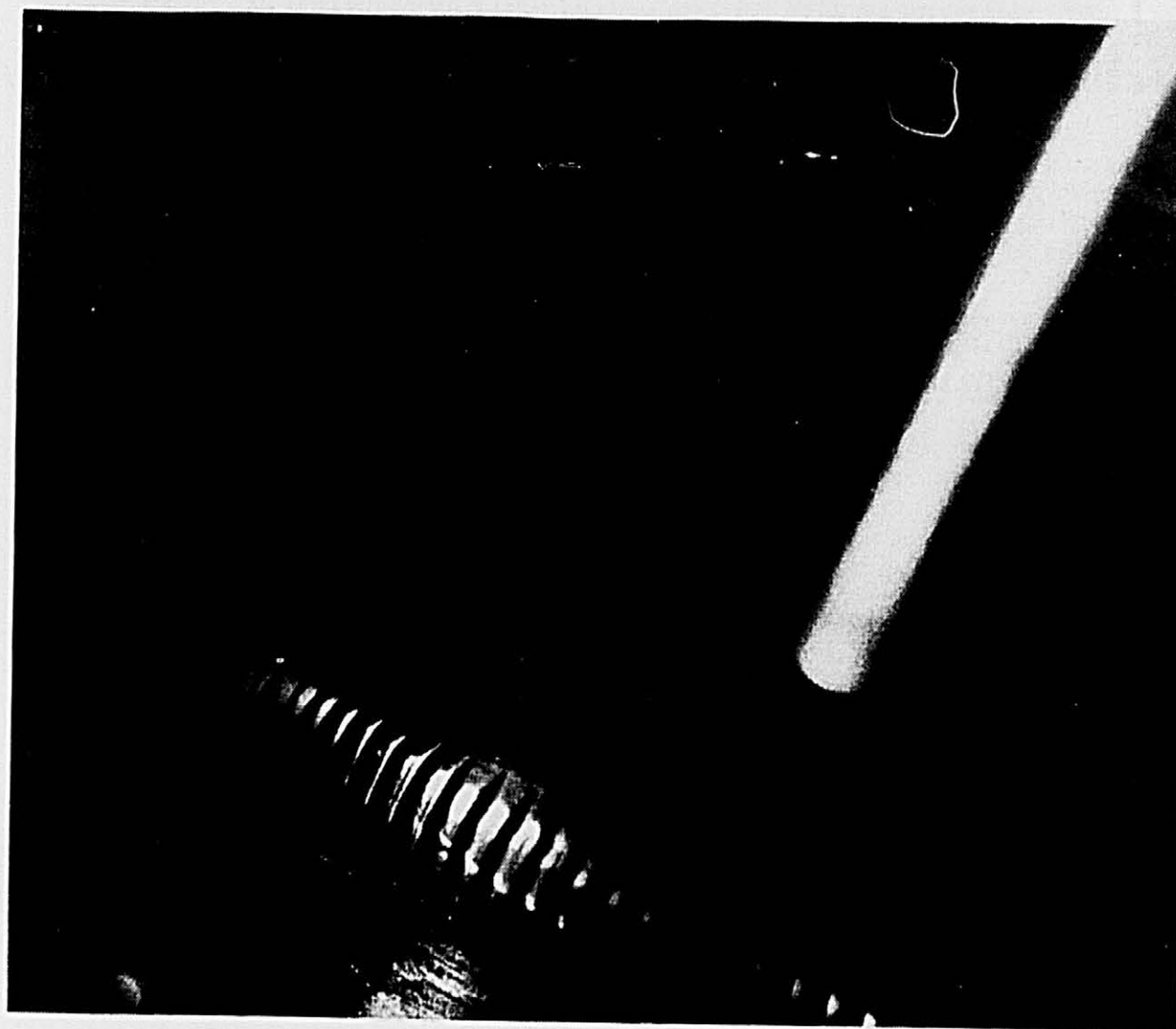
Council Meeting will follow at 6:30 p.m.

*The text of the current constitution and the proposed revisions
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"Stradivarius"
by Cameron Booth

The McGill Daily

vol 85 • no 57

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Letter

For the Hindu psyche

To the Daily

"Kill one, frighten ten thousand." This old Chinese saying is held dear by virtually every terrorist, but especially by the Kashmiri militant. Murder, torture, and rape are simply elements of the Kashmiri terrorist's very effective arsenal. Indeed, they have been quite successful, as the Kashmiri people have been tormented into silence. The terrorist has been so successful at the game, however, that it is beginning to lose its appeal. Thus, some of the more innovative among them have begun to kill European tourists.

It is therefore quite surprising that Kashmiri terrorists continue to have a large following of sympathizers. For many, a hatred of India and Hindus is sufficient to sustain moral support for the militants. Indeed, much of the Western media has been sympathetic to the terrorists, and certain organizations, such as the CBC and the Globe and Mail, have been genuinely supportive.

It is, therefore, quite easy to rationalize the malevolence displayed by Ajay Mathias in his letter to the editor (Jan. 23, 1996). Mr. Mathias condemns my criticism of the Kashmiri terrorists and of Islamic fundamentalism. Mr. Mathias also practices the art of character assassination in his letter, in an attempt to silence me, once and for all. I am portrayed by Mathias as an evil Hindu who must be extirpated, swiftly and surely. His message is clear.

Mr. Mathias is, of course, a well versed proselyte. His ilk, including St Francis Xavier, have been extremely proficient at destroying the Hindu psyche. But, of course, nurturing contempt has always been too easy. Ask the militant leaders who recently carried out the executions of the Copts in Egypt, or those who continue to kill civilians in Israel. Yes, Allah is great. But will His mercy extend to the hypocrites, the magicians of murder, to those 'who kill their brother?

B.N.C. Patet
Ph.D.2

Erratum

In Monday's issue, Abraham Fuks, dean of the Faculty of Medicine, was misquoted in "Super hospital survives the

cuts." Dean Fuks did not state "the proposed amalgamation may look enough like a plan for closures to with the government's favour." The Daily regrets the misattribution.

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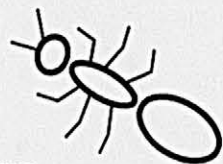
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ANGELS AND INSECTS,



INSECTS, INSECTS, INSECTS

by jessicawerb



Out of the barrage of Jane Austen film adaptations has emerged a not-so-polite Victorian tale, *Angels and Insects*, written by A.S. Byatt, and brought to the screen by director Philip Haas. This is a tale of undeniable creepiness, saturated with enough insect imagery to fill a textbook — highly appropriate since this is the story of an entomologist, William Adamson (played by Mark Rylance), newly wed to a reverend's daughter.

From the beginning there is something odd about the family into which Mr. Adamson has wed. An eerie calmness surrounds everything they do. They're all extremely pale, white and blond (there's not a trace of pigment in the lot of them), and they have the family name to match — Alabaster. Mrs. Alabaster is a revolting creature. While her daughters remain beautifully slim and demure, Mrs. Alabaster is uncannily pig-like, consisting mainly of rolls of rippling flesh.

Mr. Adamson's bride Eugenia (played by Patsy Kensit), normally quiet and unobtrusive, is fiercely passionate in bed. All is perfect until Eugenia proves to be extremely fertile, and starts pumping out the babies. When pregnant she becomes bloated and immobile, unable to do anything but eat, and unwilling to let him into her bed. She alternates between these states of repulsive, mobilising pregnancy and excitable sexual hunger.

During his wife's pregnancies, Mr. Adamson befriends the children's governess, Matty Crompton (played by Kristin Scott Thomas). He discovers that she shares his passion for insects, and together they embark upon the writing of a book about the life of a nest of ants living nearby. These ants supply much of the symbolic imagery of the movie, and when we see the huge and bloated queen ant, the similarities to Eugenia and her amazing baby-making abilities

are painfully obvious.

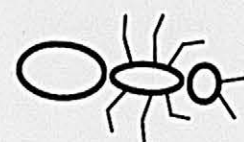
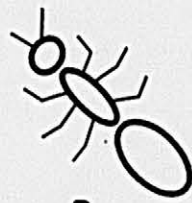
Images of insects pervade the film. There are butterflies, the aforementioned ants, flies, woodbugs, moths — you name it. Even the costumes are meant to evoke visions of the bug world.

Near the beginning of the film Eugenia is decked out in a striped yellow and black dress, complete with a net-like fringe. She not only looks just like a bee, but she also looks very silly, and the audience couldn't help but titter at her appearance.

This audience reaction illustrates the one flaw of the film: the imagery is a bit overdone. Rather than a subtle approach, the director puts enough creepy-crawly imagery in the film to drive the audience buggy.

The other theme running throughout the film is that of Darwin's ideas of evolution. While the nightly dinner conversations turn to the survival of the fittest and the preservation of the gene pool, the reverend Alabaster struggles to reconcile his faith with Darwin's notion of natural selection. The dichotomy of the affluent Alabaster family and the working-class William and Matty becomes clearer: they are regarded as creatures from different gene pools.

The symbolism of insects, and themes of Darwin and gene pools come crashing together at the film's shocking climactic revelation. This is a film where all that is seen and heard is a cover for all that is hidden, where the subtlety of the acting and unobtrusiveness of the characters are countered by the blatant imagery and the shocking truth behind the pale Alabaster clan. One leaves the theatre feeling mildly disturbed, despite the film's fairly happy ending. This is a Victorian romance unlike anything Jane Austen could have dreamed, even in her wildest nightmares.

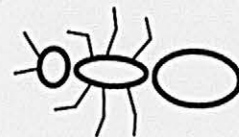


Extra! Extra!

Tragedy not dead!

Read all about Margaret's Museum

by bruce maxwell



I think it was Borges who said that, in our age, tragedy, as an art form, is dead. Director Mort Ransen's *Genie* award winning *Margaret's Museum* proves him wrong.

Based on Sheldon Currie's *The Glace Bay Miner's Museum*, the movie recounts the story of an ill-starred mining family in mid-century Cape Breton.

Having lost a husband and a son, a brother and a nephew in "the pit", Margaret's mother and uncle struggle to avoid further tragedy in their own lives, but more importantly in the lives of what's left of the broken family's younger generation — Margaret and her promising younger brother.

In Margaret's case, this means marrying a man who's not a miner. For her brother it means escape from the stagnant redundancy of Glace Bay, and the dangerous life underground that staying would have entailed.

And the film, in emblematic tragic form, is a scamper across a delicate balance beam, a frantic, desperate, and of course, ultimately abortive attempt to avoid fate.

But *Margaret's Museum* is far more than just this story, as we are shocked to discover in its grotesque closing scenes. It's at once a subtle and sympathetic vindication of Cape Breton's reputation as the home of a backward, inbred people perched on the edge of the sea, and a caustic slap in the face to all those shortsighted enough to believe it.

As far as the acting goes, the major roles suffer, but it is stunningly good when it comes to their support.

Helena Bonham Carter does not deserve the *Genie* she won for her role as Margaret. Her (really quite good) attempt at Cape Breton accent aside, her part calls for the portrayal of a coarse, unaffected rural sophistication, the kind expressed in a language, like that of 'commoner's' Irish, devoid of literary training yet burgeoning forth in rich lo-

cutions and sallies of spontaneous wit.

Carter is best known for portraying precocious 'modern ladies' in British costume-dramas such as *A Room With a View* and *Howard's End*. But Margaret is not a modern lady, and Carter has trouble keeping this tincture out of her performance.

As if an aristocrat playing the grave digger in *Hamlet*, she simplifies and stupefies Margaret. And because of

Margaret's importance to the story, her performance almost occludes the compassionate and intimate light the film tries so hard to cast on Margaret's culture, and its enduringly uneasy predicament.

Clive Russell as Margaret's husband is also disappointing. Towards the end of the film, the script demands that he undergo a crucial character transformation. He doesn't, and some of the story's texture is planed down as a result.

But if Carter doesn't deserve her *Genie*, Kate Nelligan as Margaret's mother

deserves two. She plays her part transparently, and single-handedly steals the show.

Kenneth Welsh, who also received a *Genie* for his work as the uncle, excels as well. He has to play the most explicitly tragic element in the story, and serves, seemingly, as the film's barometer of tragedy.

In the face of one slight upon another to his unbroken hope for his family he remains strong, and calmly, almost naively, defiant. But when he falls he falls, and shortly on his heels the broader plot comes crashing down all around.

Margaret's Museum is a film which could bear remaking. But the weak performances on the part of the major actors can't shut out what is a truly brilliant tragic story.



Montréal (CUP) - The radio station occupies the top floor of a brown building a stone's throw from the Seaway. Its 50-watt signal barely reaches past the bridge that towers behind it. The morning drive show might attract 5 000 listeners on a good day, and the news room is a desk with a vintage computer and three radios — all tuned to other stations.

The radio announcer reads the call letters and gives the time in Mohawk, but the introduction to the Neil Young song that follows is in English.

"We'd alienate a lot of people if we did it all in Mohawk," says Joe Delaronde, programme director and morning man for K103-FM, the sound of the Kahnawake reserve on Montréal's south shore. After all, it's not about turning people off, it's about making them tune in.

Making a come back

More than ever before, Canada's First Nations communities are reading, watching and listening to their own media. While their mainstream competitors grapple to balance the need to inform and entertain the public, many First Nations media outlets are taking their mandates a step further. They're using the airwaves and printed page for advocacy, healing and communicating the concerns of their communities to the outside world. It's about bridging the gaps — linguistic, cultural, geographical, and political — for the communities they serve.

Kahnawake's CKRK is just one of over 180 Native radio stations across the country and is part of this burgeoning First Nations communications industry.

After being almost decimated by the Mulroney government's cuts to funding for First Nations' newspapers, radio and TV networks in 1990, the native media is finally healthy and growing. The most recent edition of Matthews' Media Directory lists 52 aboriginal newspapers, magazines and newsletters. The native network, Television Northern Canada (TNC), recently announced plans to broadcast its programming to markets in the southern part of the country.

"I think native media is so popular because of ownership," says Solomon Awashish, morning radio host of the CBC Northern Services' Winschgaoug (Wake up!).

"Before it was all in French or English and people didn't understand it. Now we feel it belongs to us," says Solomon.

His Cree language programme is broadcast each weekday from seven to nine in the morning, and has an audience of 30 000 listeners across Québec and Northern Canada.

An issue of protection

Solomon says Natives have embraced radio because it compliments their oral culture, where information and traditions are passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. Radio also performs an important function in helping Native groups preserve and promote their languages and strengthen their culture.

"Promoting the language is very important to us," says Bernard Hervieux of the Société de communication AtikamekwMontagnais (SOCAM). "We've been invaded by TV and we have to fight with the other mediums in order to protect our language."

Each week, SOCAM produces and distributes 15 hours of first language radio programming for Natives in the North-Eastern part of the province, where many residents don't speak French or English. It tries to promote Native culture by broad-casting a wide variety of community events, from hockey games to mu-

"It's very important for us, and especially me, that we are able to talk to both sides on any issue. We don't want to be a propaganda vehicle"

— Joe Delaronde, programme director, K103-FM

ing the content of their broadcasts and publications.

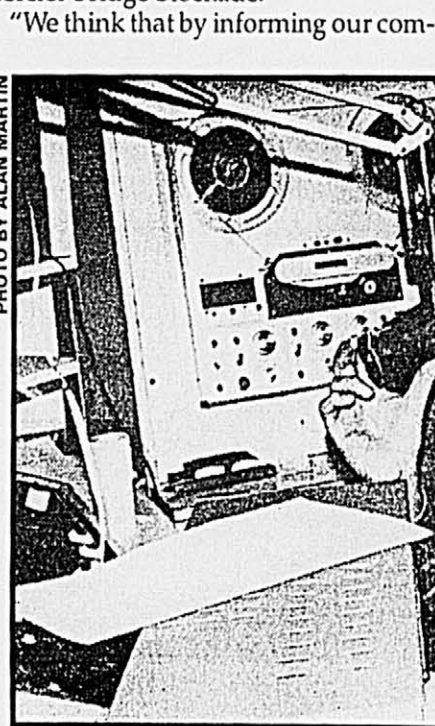
Oblin believes that if communications are to inform and support communities, then they must reflect their values. He explains that the mainstream tradition of aggressive journalism and probing questioning makes Crees uncomfortable. As a result, interviews often become open-ended forums in which people talk at length about their views.

"Whatever affects a segment of Cree society affects all of Cree society," he explains. Whereas mainstream media tends to tackle controversial issues by focus-

ing on stories of individuals, that approach doesn't work for the Cree. "It's not a question of blaming a segment, but of everyone assuming some of the responsibility," says Oblin.

Solomon Awashish of the CBC agrees that his culture directly influences his broadcasts. "There are a lot of taboos in the Cree culture that inhibit traditional journalism. Cree people are more into the long-version story. When an elder tells me a story I can't just cut him off. It would be very disrespectful of me and my audience to edit his story."

In other communities, the native media not only acts as an agent of culture, but must fill the role of peacemaker and ambassador. In Kahnawake, a weekly newspaper is helping to heal the wounds that still linger from 1990 Oka crisis and Mercier bridge blockade.



Reflecting the community

Deer describes his award-winning publication as "a community newspaper that happens to be Native," and says the paper tries to cover all aspects of life in Kahnawake, from hard news, to sports and birthday announcements.

Deer feels a special responsibility to communicate the wide variety of viewpoints within the reserve, because he knows that mainstream journalists and politicians rely on the First Nations media to tell them what Natives are thinking. Deer, who was formerly a leader of a traditionalist long-house society, says his paper also tries to counteract the rifts within the community by providing balanced coverage of the issues it faces and showing its common ground.

The obligation to provide the public with objective and balanced coverage is also a concern for K-103's Joe Delaronde.

"It's very important for us, and especially me, that we are able to talk to both sides on any issue. We don't want to be a

First Nations media begins to make its mark TUNING IN

by johnathongatehouse

"Our people are very critical, but you can't be critical if you don't have the information," he says. "Now more people are aware of what's going on politically. Before (radio) we were so isolated at the local level. We've become the opposition to our own politicians. If there's no controversy in our daily life we're always to be at the mercy of the decision makers"

— Bernard Hervieux, Société de communication AtikamekwMontagnais (SOCAM)

be critical if you don't have the information," he says. "Now more people are aware of what's going on politically. Before (radio) we were so isolated at the local level. We've become the opposition to our own politicians. If there's no controversy in our daily life we're always to be at the mercy of the decision makers."

Another style of journalism

However, a confrontational approach to journalism isn't common to all First Nations groups. As George Oblin of the James Bay Cree Communication Society points out, the character of individual native cultures plays a large role in shap-

ing the content of their broadcasts and publications.

"The paper shows people our humanity. When you read the *Eastern Door* you see a reflection of Kahnawake," he continues.

might offer the key to understanding the growing crisis within Canada's native communities. By providing a voice to people who have traditionally gone unheard, native media not only strengthens their cultures, but also communicates a vision of the future.

— from the Link, Concordia University

CKRK 103FM AT KAHNAWAKE

A story's tale

by rachel **dudelzak**

...She thank'd me,
And bade me, if I had a
friend that lov'd her,
I should but teach him
how to tell my story,
And that would woo her.

William Shakespeare,
Othello

Self-pity is rampant on February week-nights. Storycircle, a story-telling group that meets at the Yellow Door on every even Thursday of a month, exorcises this misery by sharing stories with other people.

Anybody who drops in can participate by telling stories, listening to them or both. If you are the type who finds that narration lifts your spirits, this may be just the thing for you.

The group meets in the Yellow Door's basement, an unpretentious and somewhat sparse setting. Once you sit yourself in the chair in the middle of the room, you are transformed into the storyteller — experiencing performance anxiety and the thrill of being in the spot-light first-hand.

Storycircle, however, has more serious aspirations than catering to the neurotic in you.

"We wanted to have some story-swapping ground here," says Storycircle's founder Denise Markham.

"Story-telling," she continues, "is an art that is now being revived. It brings something that will inspire you to feel and think."

This noble sentiment has not yet been recognised at McGill. Markham laments that the "McGill community does not seem to be catching on. Students in the Arts faculty can especially profit from being exposed to the milieu where stories are exchanged."

On the other hand, getting together eight people on a February night in Montreal is a bit of an accomplishment in itself.

Despite small numbers, much good can be said for the Storycircle. Markham herself is an actress and a musician: every story she tells is an absorbing performance. There are several librarians and literati in the group, so the stories tend to be more sophisticated than those in the *Red Herring*. Yet those who are not involved with the Storycircle as closely as the librarians usually do not stay with the group.

"I have met some terrific people," explains Markham, "who came, told a great story or two,

put me in touch with others, but did not show up again. Maybe it's the competition — too many other fun things to do?"

Such high turnover may be in part due to the atmosphere of the Storycircle. There is much enthusiasm and goodwill, but some find the idea of telling a story to a bunch of strangers a bit disconcerting.

Markham and the others of the Storycircle are doing plenty, though, to make the group as welcoming as possible. Participation is bilingual and volun-

tary: if you do not want to tell any stories nobody will press you, and if you do, nobody will ask you to shut up.

Most importantly, Storycircle is a flexible group. On the night I visited, the stories told ranged from the Brother Grimm's fable "The Bean, the Straw and the Coal" to a story about a Black slave's family, to a bunch of somewhat irreverent anecdotes (you had to be there for the irreverent part).

Stories themselves have glorified storytelling: Othello

wooed a lush heiress with his enthralling tales, and in the world of *Arabian Nights*, loquacity saved lives. However, all these imaginary characters told their stories with a concrete reward in mind. It is hard to justify telling stories to five people you see for the first time in your life, no matter how nice they are.

Those dedicated to the art of story-telling, and not concerned with such dilettantish musings, will find the Storycircle very appealing. "Storytelling," offers Markham, "is a ritual. It is re-

ally magic. Besides, it is a teaching tool. You can let people learn about different cultures simply by telling stories that belong to different cultural traditions."

Storycircle is primarily interesting as "something new, something different." As of now, it cannot boast the status of popular entertainment. But who knows, maybe it will take off, and McGill students will find themselves sitting cozily in the Yellow Door's basement, telling their stories. And we all live happily ever after.

Little Sister's Bookstore to Appeal Long awaited Supreme Court Ruling

CANADA'S POST MODERN INQUISITION

by meredith **cohen**

If you're wondering what the Nazi regime, the Inquisition and Canada Customs have in common, you needn't look further than the piles of smoldering books to discover the answer.

Book burning — one of the oldest and truest forms of censorship — is almost as prevalent today as it was in medieval times.

These days, Canada has been contributing to this colourful tradition and lighting up its own little unpublicised bonfires. Obviously one of Canada's best kept secrets, books seized by Customs are often burned.

However, the owners of Vancouver's Little Sisters' Bookstore have not kept their outrage of this unjust treatment a secret but have decided to fight fire with fire.

Little Sisters has been feuding with Canada Customs on a case by case basis because the border officials have the authority to detain books which they deem 'obscene'. In October 1994, the bookstore brought Canada Customs to trial for the unconstitutionality of their seizures, a move made in conjunction with the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association.

After almost two years of waiting, the BC Supreme Court has handed down its ruling, declaring that Canada Customs has used its mandate to censor books and other materials in a

manner which infringes upon rights granted by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

According to Janine Fuller of Little Sisters, "This decision is a complete vindication of

Little Sisters had hoped to obtain a ruling that would deign the statute that gives customs its censoring clout unconstitutional. But the Supreme Court ruled against them on this point.

"This is a declaration from the BC Supreme Court that Canada Customs conducts its censorship business in a manner that systematically infringes the constitutional rights of Canadians. So business as usual at Customs now means unconstitutional and illegal behavior," states John Dixon of the BC Civil Liberties Association.

Over the past ten years, business as usual has meant the rampant confiscation of books. Among the works confiscated are various writings of the renowned, but gay, Oscar Wilde, *The Politics of Meat*, a cookbook, and feminist works by the well known scholar bell hooks.

It has become evident over the years that queer and feminist literature is targeted at the border, es-

pecially shipments of these books to small book-sellers. More specifically, lesbian and gay book-stores, like Little Sisters in Vancouver, are targeted.

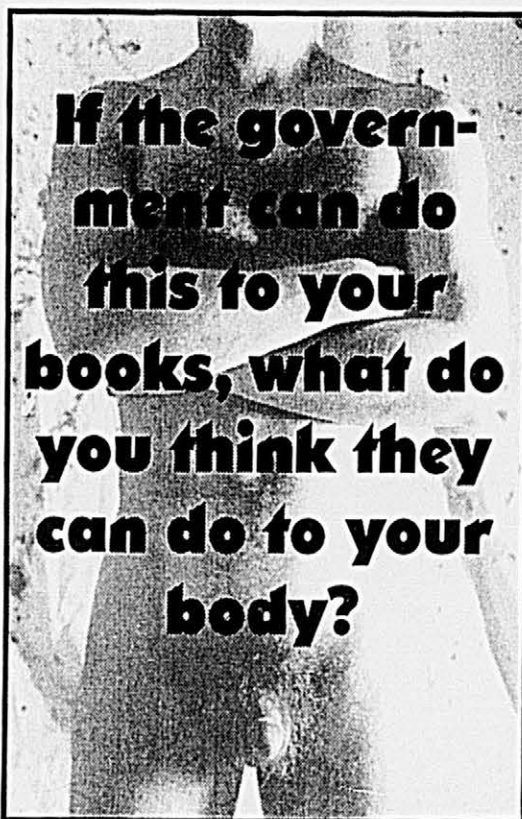
This becomes as much of a financial burden as an outrage because the seized books seldom make it to their destinations. Instead, they are detained or reduced to ashes. As a result, many eager readers have been left with empty hands, the bank accounts of Little Sisters and other similar booksellers empty, and lots of people full of anger.

In the Court's ruling, Justice Kenneth Smith stated that "the unconstitutional conduct of Customs was not confined to episodes of isolated instances of injustice," but that it was a "grave systemic problem."

Fuller said that despite the recent ruling books are still being seized at the border. "In a free country like Canada, the government has no place in what Canadians can and can not read," she stated.

That's why, after a \$250 000 case, Little Sisters is eager to move ahead to the Court of Appeals.

Book burning bad. Freedom of expression good. Let's hope that the Court of Appeals can distinguish between these simple concepts and not send us back to the dark ages.



DAILY PHOTO BY JENN HARDING

the gay and lesbian community and the lives of its people and for that we celebrate the decision. It has been a long hard climb. We haven't quite reached the summit but we're damn close. We are confident that we will succeed at the Court of Appeal."

Unfortunately, the verdict that was handed down on January 19 of this year is not as great of a triumph as it may seem.

Events

Thursday, February 29

- Prof. Marion Finley, Chairman of the Baha'i Computer Communications Association speaks on "The Internet as a Tool for Promoting World Unity: The Experience of the International Baha'i Community." Wilson Hall, Wendy Patrick Room, 3506 University, 16h30.
- Shakti, Women of Colour Collective meeting at 18h, QPIRG office.
- QPIRG and Action Rebutts sponsor Waste Management Conference with Paul Connett, american scientist and activist, Leacock 26, 19h.

Friday, March 1

- Shakti, Women of Colour Collective Presents "New View, New Eyes" a video poem by Gitanjali. 17h30, Arts 230.
- The Garden Barde plays the Yellow Door, with an Open Stage after the show. Door opens 20h, show starts 20h30, \$3. Info 398-2371.
- Professor B.C. Sanctuary launches his Chemistry Tutorials on CD-ROM at 13h30, Leacock 132.
- Canadian Landscapes, the Second Annual Conference of the Canadian Studies Graduate Students' Association of McGill. Registration 12h30, opening remarks by Desmond Morton at 13h. Thomson House, info 398-7366. Free.
- Evening at the Bagg St. Synagogue, the oldest active synagogue in Montréal, organised by students and Prof. Jim Torzcynier, 17h30, corner of Bagg and Clarke. Service, speakers and reception. All welcome.
- L'Association Rochambeau invites you to a "Glow in the Dark" party at Gert's. Come with a white top to have a good time.

Ongoing

- Latitudes: The McGill Journal of Developing Areas Studies is looking for creative and academic work, in English or French, from any discipline relating to the study of developing areas. Deposit two copies of your papers, short essays, photo essays in the Latitudes mailbox at the SSMU desk by March 1. Include phone number. Info: 279-5413 (Elizabeth).
- Full-Time McGill Students! Like to Play Word Games? Fluent in English? Come Play-Test a new game. Fun, refreshments. Call Kate 694-8966.
- Concordia Women's Centre, discussion group on body image issues, Fridays 14h-16h, 2020 Mackay. To register call Estelle or Pat at 848-7413.

*Student risks life for racial equality,
university calls it bullying*

"WE ARE NOT RACIALLY DIVIDED"

by zacharyschwartz

For five years she's been fighting the University of Vermont — but now she's fighting for her life.

Shontae Praileau, originally as a public act of defeat, and now in what has been described as a "brave struggle for justice", is well into the third month of a hunger strike.

"This isn't just about me," Shontae insists. "This is a history that's built up to this point."

A voice against racism

The history to which Shontae refers concerns the University of Vermont's handling of racism and diversity on campus.

Since 1988, three years before Shontae's arrival as a first year student, the University of Vermont has seen a whirlwind of demonstrations, committees and commissions dedicated to racial equality and multiculturalism.

But it seems the whirlwind may be little more than a lot of hot air.

"Again, it's the administration asking what the students want, and then ignoring what they want," said University of Vermont faculty member Judy Ashley, frustrated with the administration's ignorance of the students whose interests it claims to have at heart.

"What's going on here is the continuation of takeovers and committees and agreements and meetings and promises that are never kept. It's the same stuff over and over again. There's never any ac-

tion. We just talk and talk and talk, and we never do anything."

For Shontae, the final blow came this year, when the university reorganised its Office

**"Again, it's the administration asking what the students want, and then ignoring what they want,"
— University of Vermont
faculty member Judy Ashley**

of Multicultural Affairs, making it "more inclusive" by firing and replacing the director, and disbanding its Commission on Racial Equality.

Defeated by the university's refusal to allow its community of Asian, Latin American and Native American students to have a voice in choosing their new director, Shontae began her hunger strike December 1 last year.

Now, Shontae's action has grown into a source of courage and strength for herself and other students. With messages of support arriving from as far away as San Diego, and demonstrations on campus and across the U.S. backing her hunger strike, Shontae has pledged to continue the fast until the university reaffirms its commitment to race relations on campus.

"We're asking for a voice in saying who we want as our director. I think that's just and right," she explained, summarising her written demands — demands that the university's Asian, Latin American and Native American students have been pushing for years.

"They tell us we can have input and sit on the committee. Is that power? No, it's input. We recommend, but [can] not choose."

Lip service

Although claiming "great respect for her beliefs and great respect for her actions in terms of identifying to the community the serious nature that she thinks they are," the administration believes that Shontae is trying to hold the university hostage at the expense of non-minority students.

"I will never support your agenda designed to divide and separate our community. While I continue to be concerned about your well-being and hope you will rethink your course of action, your fast will have no effect whatsoever on future decisions," wrote Thomas Salmon, the president of the University of Vermont, in a letter to Shontae last month.

Shontae insists that Salm-

people? Now why would white people support a separatist? That doesn't make sense. We are not racially divided."

Despite giving much lip service to student input and Shontae's right to protest, the university has made it clear that it refuses to take action on the basis of Shontae's hunger strike.

"While I deeply respect the right of individuals to engage in acts of protest, such acts are not necessary to bring issues to my attention," said Salmon. "Decisions will not be made simply to end protests."

As Shontae risks her very life in the name of the university's community, even the student newspaper has swallowed the president's accusations that Shontae is bullying the university.

"We... recognise that race relations here need to be scrutinised, but realise that the university's making concessions to end a single student's

hunger strike may be interpreted as bartering," read last month's editorial.

"She's not doing it for herself — she's doing it for all of us," stated University of Vermont student

Despite giving much lip service to student input and Shontae's right to protest, the university has made it clear that it refuses to take action on the basis of Shontae's hunger strike.

on's accusations are unfair.

"One thing I'm very happy that's come out of this is the connection with the white allies. How dare president Salmon call me a separatist when both protests in support of me have been mostly white

Kathy Wu, who does not agree with the university and the student paper's position.

"We admire and respect her, and support her in any way we can."

With files from the University of Vermont Cynic.

Groups discuss hunger in Montréal

Getting food on the table

by akbarhussain

With "stop the cut" slogans from the February 7 demonstration still reverberating in my head, I arrived at the Concordia University campus for a discussion about hunger in Montréal.

Hosted by the School of Community and Public Affairs, the panel was to discuss the impact of provincial budget constraints and the review of the Minister of Revenue Security on how hunger will be handled in this city.

With Premier Bouchard calling for at least \$500 million to be cut over the next four years, the province is anticipating a considerable shortfall in its social services budget.

The panel contained representatives from organisations which distribute food to low-income people in the city, like Montréal Harvest, Chico Resto Pop and Regroupement des cuisines collectives du Québec.

"We are bringing these organisations together in hope that they may consolidate their efforts in light of the governmental budget constraints," wrote Erin Robinson, one of the panel organisers.

Sylvie du Cap, the administrative officer of Montréal Harvest lost no time in underlining the increasing gravity of the problem faced by the city's food banks and soup kitchens.

"The problems we are encountering are very real," maintained du Cap.

Invoking a whirlwind of statistics, du Cap explained that since 1992 the number of people depending on food from her organisation has increased by over 60 per cent.

But du Cap said that Montréal Harvest is having a hard time coping with the

huge rise in the need for its services.

Started in 1984, Montréal Harvest deals with over 30 tons of food every day and is the largest depot of fruit and vegetables in North America.

Although initially a temporary measure to deal with the recession in the 1980s, food banks such as Montréal Harvest have become increasingly depended upon by people in the city who are finding it harder to afford basic food needs.

According to du Cap, the government's spending cuts are among the main reasons for the tremendous rise and spread of poverty in the city.

But du Cap insists that, "There is enough food, the problem is distribution."

Why, asked du Cap, should social programmes be so extensively targeted by the current wave of budget cutting?

Joanne Talbot, who hails from a long career in commu-

nity service, joined the panel to represent the Regroupement des cuisines collectives du Québec which currently employs almost 3 000 people. She focused predominantly on the moral and sociological impacts of hunger.

Talbot demonstrated, through the means of a video recording, that soup kitchens organised by her group do more than provide meals to people. She said they provide socially transcending experiences because they let people work together.

Operating in the Hochelaga-Maisonneuve neighborhood, Jacynthe Ouellette of Chico Resto Pop said 40 per cent of people in the area do not have high school degrees. She added that in an atmosphere like this it is essential to give the unemployed and welfare recipients "a sense of dignity."

Chico Resto Pop's policy is to charge a nominal fee for every set of meals it offers.

All three organisations survive by receiving 'recycled food' from wholesalers and manufacturers. The food they obtain cannot be sold because it is slightly below grade, or because it is packaged incorrectly, or because the vegetables are too small or large.

Either way, this food is essential for many Montrealers. Food banks have had to make do with whatever they get — and in many cases they transform this into a lot more.

Montréal Harvest, for example, can feed a family of four for two months for \$50.

David Alper of Project Genesis was indignant at the extent of hunger in Montréal. "The situation is unacceptable," he said.

Claiming that the government cutbacks are inappropriate, he called for a greater availability of affordable daycare and housing.

Despite the attack on the social safety net from the highest levels, organisations like Chico Resto Pop, the Cuisines collectives and Montréal Harvest plan to continue battling hunger in the city.

As Talbot said "we stand for the fact that we can pull through."

Spending cuts are among the main reasons for the tremendous rise and spread of poverty in the city.

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Citizen Fish - *Millennia Madness*
(Blurg/Lookout!)

Citizen Fish is in many ways one of the most conscious bands around and has been for some time, both in its present incarnation and formerly, as the British Subhumans. Weighing in heavily on the social conscience side of things, as opposed to recent trends that seem to be geared towards pure entertainment/brainless pop, the ska-punk here maintains a sober criticism of western society. Dick Fish's lyrics are pointed; they manage to criticise many parts of society equally — including less obvious targets like their own friends or the music scene that supports them. "Tremendous! Fab!" the critics cried. An unpopular culture was opened wide to show the world what wasn't hidden but up 'til then had been forbidden — with more open eyes than open minds, the critics searched, intent to find the latest act... Recently, it has been relatively easy to be disillusioned with the whole alternative music

scene since it has revealed itself as being mostly a marketing campaign; nicely pre-marketed for years by the colourful street punks who created a necessary curiosity and rebellious image. Citizen Fish make it very obvious that their music is a tool with which they would create social change. Should the greater public be drawn to them for whatever reason, they want to utilise this to the greatest benefit. There is no song on this disc that is devoid of a socio-political message. Accordingly, there are no songs that so-called alternative radio jocks can use to perpetuate a sense of rebellion, while appealing "good taste" (i.e. superfluous crap). This is the image I had of punk rock — content over form. In this case, however, the form is just as good. Compared to the last album, *Millennia Madness* has integrated to strong effect, some slower dub or reggae elements while keeping the punk guitar and Dick's easily recognisable voice. It will be interesting to see how much air-time this caustic ska gets.

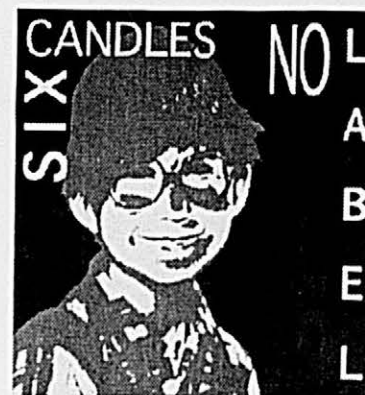
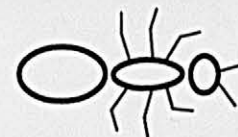
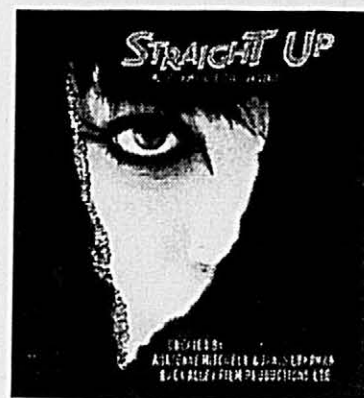
- jaymccoy

Soundtrack — *Straight Up*
(Alliance)

Straight Up, currently airing on CBC, is a six part series created and produced by Janis Lundman and Adrienne Mitchell, whose previous work includes the documentaries *Talk 16* and *Talk 19*.

Though the show was scripted rather than depicting actual events, the stories come from the producers' experience with the *Talk* documentaries and interviews with adolescents. Most of the actors — with the notable exception of *Road to Avonlea*'s Sarah Polley — have minimal acting experience, lending the show a more current edge. The soundtrack to *Straight Up* features, appropriately, an array of independent Canadian talent. Though the line-up is intriguing — including the likes of Bass is Base, Venus Cures All, Blinker the Star, and the Killjoys — the CD falls a little short. This is due in part, to additional sound bites of incidental music and dialogue from the show. Many of the musical sound bites leave you wishing that there was a little more than 30 seconds of them. The dialogue is somewhat interesting, but really fails to entice those who haven't seen the show. Ultimately, the use of sound bites is too trite and is too reminiscent of the faux docudrama trend that is starting to show its age. Of the proper songs, some — like Bass is Base's "Wild & Mellow" and Hip Club Groove's "Rugged Operator" — are much more than filler, but they aren't enough to warrant a recommendation.

- derekfung



Compilation — *Six Candles, No Label*
(M. Groz D)

With the success of Canadian independent labels such as Mint (Vancouver), Murder Records (Halifax) and Sonic Unyon (Hamilton), the notion of doing-it-yourself is seeming increasingly less far-fetched when it comes to music. With a few hundred dollars, you can record and release your own seven-inch (maybe even in coloured vinyl). For a few hundred more, you can immortalise

yourself on compact disc. *Six Candles, No Label* is the latest example of this entrepreneurial spirit. Funded in part by SSMU, the CD compilation features six bands — each to some extent connected with McGill (i.e. students). Of the bunch, Sapphires in the Mud's contributions are perhaps the most immediate. Almost as catchy and brimming with energy, are Garden Bards; whose "Crush Me" offers pop thrills with its insistent acoustic strumming and half-silly lyrics. At the other end of the spectrum is Aum Banda, an experimental collective that combines discordant melodies with more conventional rhythm structures. Of their songs, "Chromium Dioxide Emotesanke (étude #1)," in particular is at the same time the most striking (if not instantly appealing) and the most lingering after repeated listening. Steamer's "Grappa" has a similar quality; initially drifting by but improving with each successive listen. A surprising aspect of the compilation is the quality of the production. The bands have each opted to forego the low fidelity charm of the four track, in favour of the crisp sound and dynamics that a recording studio offers. Consider it SSMU cash well spent.

The official Six Candles launch is this Saturday at Bar Voltaire (11 Prince Arthur). All six bands will be strutting their stuff, so to speak.

- kevinsiu



world watch

1. South Africans attempt to bar Black students

Despite a new constitution ensuring all students equal access to public schools, residents of the suburb of Potgietersrus (240 km north of Johannesburg) have blockaded the entrance to a primary school in an effort to prevent three Black children from enrolling.

The South African government has condemned the action as illegal, and the premier of the South Africa's Northern Province, where the school is located, has issued an ultimatum to the school: Enroll the students or face closure.

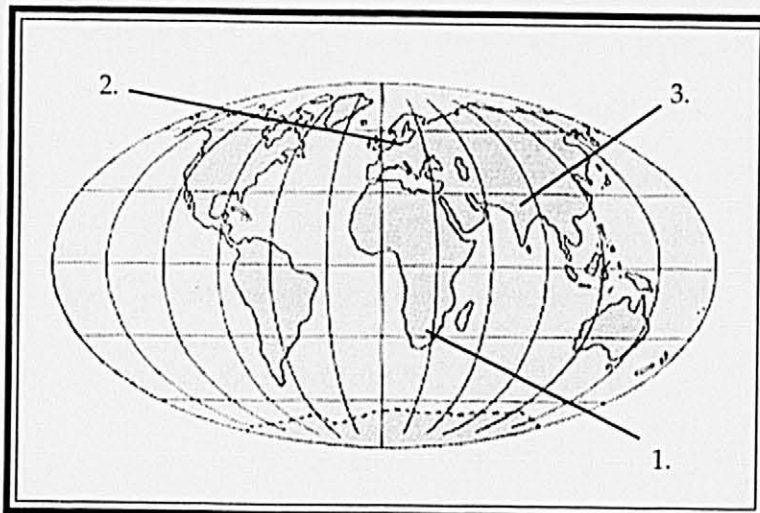
The school's lawyer maintains that parents want to preserve their language and culture, and the school has ignored the ultimatum because allowing the Black students to enroll is a cultural, not racial issue.

The Northern Province was home to the Afrikaaner Weerstandes Beweging —

the Afrikaaner Resistance Movement.
Source: cdp:headline, off the Net

2. Poland to vote on protecting queers

Queers in Poland may soon obtain their right to be free of discrimination, protected by the country's new constitution.



ban discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Queers are encouraged by the fact that Poland's new president, Aleksander Kwansieski, previously headed the committee responsible for the drafting of the document. But they remain worried about opposition from the Roman Catholic Church.

As such, the Polish queer rights group Lambda is asking international onlookers to lobby individuals in the government, including the president himself.

To date, the only other country to protect queers constitutionally — through an interim constitution still awaiting final approval — is South Africa.
Source: Rex Wockner, off the Net.

3. Indian child labour target of ad campaign

In each major town and city of India, thousands of children help supplement their family income through selling newspapers, working as domestics, sorting and selling garbage, and begging. And according to the South Asian Coalition of Child Servitude (SACCS), the real horrors of childhood

in India are seldom written about.

Millions of children between ages five and 16 work up to 12 to 16 hour days as bonded slaves in industries such as carpet weaving. Often the children have been taken from their parents by factory owners with promises of a better future, usually never returning to the family. Girls are often sold to prostitution.

A recent explosion in a factory in Bengal killed 17 children and injured 140.

Recently, SACCS — founded in India in 1982 with ties to over 200 non-governmental organisations in India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Pakistan — helped foster an advertising campaign against child labour.

Revati Sharma, a commercial art student at the Delhi School of Art, recently chose the advertising campaign as a project.

Sharma said that despite the clear fact that children are employed because they can be easily exploited with little risk of union formation, many educated adults defend child labour as a necessity of survival in a country of such extreme poverty. Using headlines in her ads like "Trapped," "Stripped" and "Crushed" and juxtaposing pictures of children and animals, Sharma hopes to jolt people into action.

Source: Ashali Varma, Earth Times News Service.

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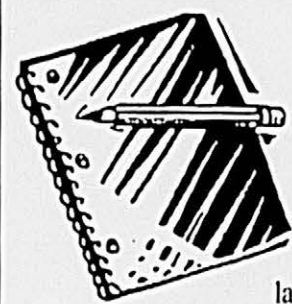
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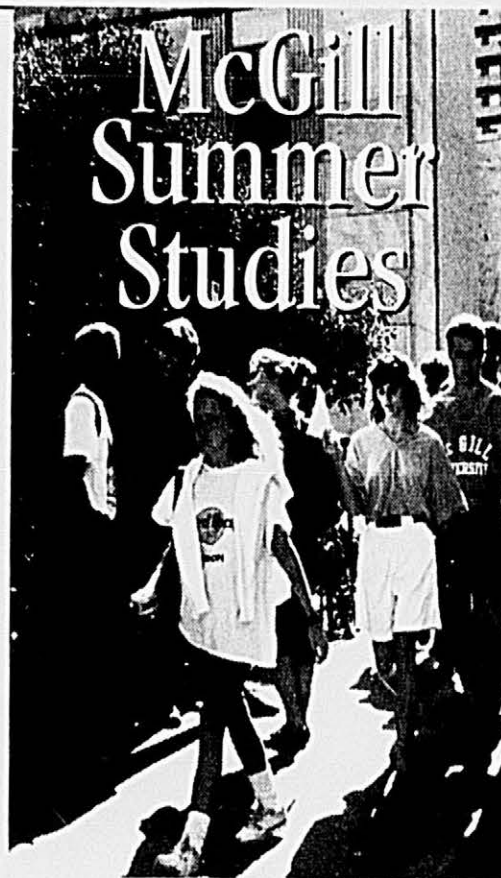
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